

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE
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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND
IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. SECURITY POLICY
BY ROBERT M. GATES
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

INTRODUCTION

THE THEME OF CHANGE IN THE SOVIET UNION HAS BEEN MUCH IN THE MEDIA IN RECENT MONTHS AS WE HAVE WATCHED THE EFFORTS OF MIKHAIL GORBACHEV TO MODERNIZE THE SOVIET ECONOMY AND CONSOLIDATE HIS POLITICAL POWER. KNOWLEDGE OF RUSSIAN WORDS SUCH AS "PERESTROIKA" AND "GLASNOST" HAS BECOME COMMONPLACE IN THE WEST. WITHOUT PARALLEL IN A GENERATION, DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION HAVE CAPTURED THE INTEREST, AND IN SOME RESPECTS THE IMAGINATION, OF A WIDE AUDIENCE AROUND THE WORLD.

IT IS TYPICAL THAT WE IN THE WEST, AND PARTICULARLY IN THE UNITED STATES, WITH OUR FOCUS ON PERSONALITIES IN POLITICS, SHOULD FOCUS ON GORBACHEV'S PERSONNEL MOVES, WHO IS UP AND WHO IS DOWN, WHO IS IN AND WHO IS OUT. THUS THE SPECIAL ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM AND SUPREME SOVIET SESSION SOME TWO WEEKS AGO.

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